

## Seawatching, Aug - Oct 1992

In Noord-Holland (NH) there were almost daily counts at Hondsbossche Zee-wering (Hbz) and Egmond and Zee (Egm). However, many hours were also counted, but on a more irregular base, in Zuid-Holland (ZH) at Bloemendaal (Bloem), the Maasvlakte and Westkapelle. Tens of hours of seawatching were carried out at Ameland (Am) and Terschelling (Tersch).

A very distinct peak in migration of Red-necked Grebes was noticed in NH during the second week of Oct. Almost a hundred birds were counted during this week. In the same period, Black-necked and Slavonian Grebes were seen in small numbers. Shags were remarkably frequent during the whole period (c. 30 records). In Aug, all records came from ZH, but in Sep/Oct all birds were observed between Bloem and Hbz. Fair numbers of Brent passed NH from 30 Sep (3430 →S, Hbz) till the first week of Oct. Easterly winds in Aug and the second half of Sep brought good numbers of waders like Snipe and Ringed Plover. On 16 Aug, 336 Snipe and 400 Ringed Plovers were seen at Hbz. On 30 Aug, 735 Ringed Plovers flew by at Hbz.

True seabirds like petrels and skuas were not particularly common. Large numbers of Gannets were only seen during a few days in mid-Oct in NH. Despite regular onshore winds, tubenoses were only seen in very small numbers, most them in the first half of Sep. Especially Fulmars were quite scarce with just one day with more than ten birds: 5 Sep, 171 →W at Tersch. A few lucky seawatchers had the best seabird they had ever seen on 24 Oct at Hbz: the first Soft-plumaged Petrel for continental Europe (see elsewhere in this issue)! Exceptional were 58 Great Skuas and 77 Arctic Skuas at Tersch on 5 Sep. During Sep, Black-headed Gulls were frequently seen in large numbers. Best day was the 11th at Bergen aan Zee (NH) with 4100 →S. From the beginning of Oct onwards, Kittiwakes and Little Gulls were seen daily in increasing numbers, but never totalling a thousand ind. The most common migrating birds this autumn were undoubtedly terns. Especially the Sandwich Tern migrated in very large numbers during Aug and Sep, with 13 days exceeding 1000 in NH. Auks were common from the first week of Oct onwards. The maximum number was 450 ind. on the 24th (Hbz). In the same period Little Auks were seen almost daily, but in very small numbers.

Information from: G.v.d. Berg, R.E. Brouwer, F. Cottaar, B.W. v. Dijk, G. Du-may, K.J. Eigenhuis, S. Geelhoed, A. Gouw, H. Groot, N.F. v.d. Ham, M. Hoek-stein, S. Lagerveld, G. v. Leeuwen, T. Mank, M. Platteeuw, A. Schaftenaar, D. Schut, R. & W. v. Splunder, L. Stegeman, P. Wolf, K. Woutersen, J.N. Ynsen, K. Zwaan.

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